



# Newsletter



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2-11 FA FRG News

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## FROM IRAQ :

### Note from Battalion Commander

Greetings to all of the "On Time Family" wherever you may be. I could not be more proud of what the men of this Battalion have accomplished on this most critical mission. The temperature is starting to cool down in this area. I am proud to say we did not have a single heat injury during the deployment. I credit this to my NCOs who ensure that soldiers take care of themselves.

We thank you for your support, and thanks to all the families who submit quick hellos to their soldiers in the FRG Newsletter. The men sure do enjoy that portion. We know that you miss your families, and we will be home soon. The exact date is not available, but when it becomes set, we will not be able to release it for our protection. Please be assured that we do not intend to hide it from you, but specific dates will not be published until we are ready to load out and come home. Again, this is for our protection, so no one will have movement dates for the Brigade Combat Team. We will notify your FRG Leaders on redeployment dates. Make sure you have their contact data, and that they have yours. We continue to receive letters from all over the country thanking us for our service. They are very inspirational and I'm proud that every letter we receive, we send back a thank you card. This shows this units maturity, professionalism, and elite reputation. We are continuing to do great work with training of the Iraqi Security Forces (The Police, Iraqi National Guard, and Iraqi Border Patrol) by the complete dedication and professionalism of my Battalion NCOs and Junior Officers. They are tremendous and have a "no mission too tough, all missions will be complete" attitude. The Rest and Relaxation (R&R) Plan is going great..

I talked about this last month, but want to make sure this is a priority for families who left the Island to return to families in CONUS. I have talked with all the soldiers about their plans to keep their families updated and informed on reintegration with our families. We have mandatory classes on family reintegration that we will take here in Iraq before we redeploy. We have talked about what has to happen if their families went back to the mainland and want to be there when we arrive back on the Island. If you went home to the mainland, and you want you home/apartment ready for your spouse to come home to, we recommend you get back to the Island the first week of December so that you can find a place, get your household goods delivered, and get everything set up before your husband arrives. I'm sure the number one question you want answered is when are the soldiers coming home. As soon as we have a window of time, I will pass that to the FRG Leaders. During this phase of a deployment, a lot of rumors start. Rumors can hurt a unit, so please don't start them, or spread them. Your FRG Leaders will have the most updated knowledge of re-deployment. Thanks for your understanding.

Be proud of your Husband's duty here, we are doing things that are making history, and they are making positive memories that will last a lifetime. Please take care of each other back home; your husbands need to know you are keeping strong and that you can raise issues with each Battery FRG group. Take Care and God Bless the "On Time Battalion". I am proud and fortunate to be Your Commander. Thanks for all you have done.

LTC Joseph Connell  
LTC, FA  
Commanding

### Note from CSM

Greetings Family members and friends back home. I hope you all had an enjoyable

Columbus Day. The “ON Time Soldiers” morale continues to be on the rise, with the temperature beginning to drop.

Let’s see; in the last few weeks, besides normal operations, we have celebrated Labor Day and Columbus Day. As always, the “On Timers” continue to set the standard, supporting every mission with a can-do attitude. The Battalion is setting a blistering operational pace, but our Soldiers make sure everything falls into place. We are still conducting split-based operations. Each and every Soldier in the battalion knows what needs to be done to accomplish the mission, and they never fail to provide outstanding operational, logistical, medical and communications support in support of the battalion mission. Life here in the battalion’s area of operation continues to improve daily.

I want to thank all of you for all of your support to our Soldiers here. Through your letters, cards, care packages, and other goodies, you have been motivators and modes of encouragement to all of us.

Our Family Readiness Group leaders have been doing a great job in answering all the concerns you have brought to them, and I think they deserve to be commended for their work. I would like to personally thank you for all your strength and patience. All the On Time Soldiers continue to keep you in our thoughts and prayers.

JOE K. ZANDERS  
CSM, USA

## “HAWGS”

Dear Family and Friends of the HAWGS,

As the month of November looms over the horizon, the light of the end of the tunnel begins to emerge. We will all experience a wide range of emotions as we begin to mentally prepare ourselves for our reunion with our loved ones. begin preparing your family adventures. Fortunately, we are stationed in Hawaii where there is an

abundance of exciting outdoor events and attractions to enjoy with our families. We are all proud of our soldiers; HHS/2-11 Field Artillery Regiment continues to forge our legacy. We have a tough and demanding mission, as you know HHS is diverse and is divided into many teams: logistics support, battalion operations, Re-Trans, Log-Pac, maintenance, medics, and the Iraqi National Guard training team, and Border Police teams. Each and every one of our Hawgs have a vital role in our mission and can be directly credited with the units overall success. We are succeeding with our assigned mission and more importantly; creating a self-reliant Iraqi force that is capable and ready. Iraqi national elections will be taking place in January in order to establish a stable government body of leadership. The Iraqis did it with our help which is clearly a testament of our accomplishments.

For families that have relocated to another state, it’s now time to begin preparations to return to Hawaii. With the expansion of all branches of services in Hawaii, there will be limited housing (both on and off post), and this will clearly be a case of “Early Bird Gets the Worm”. Our FRG and Rear Detachment have valuable insight on current changes and resources available. I truly recommend that families return to Hawaii no later than the beginning of December so you can get a head start re-establishing your home again in preparation for your husbands return.

Here are a few key areas to have squared to ease the transition back to Hawaii:

- On-Post Housing List / Off-Post housing availability
- COLA / BAH Adjustment
- Medical coverage location
- House hold goods delivery
- Children’s School registration
- POV retrieval from storage / activate insurance
- Powers of Attorney

All of us, soldiers and families are performing a wide range of jobs we have never experienced before. This clearly demonstrates the strength of our families that they are doing a magnificent job on the home front. Job Well Done! Please continue to keep in touch with your FRG, leader and Rear Detachment as questions arise.

Who we are and what we do is not charity. We have stood the test of time, we are Soldiers and Army Families. Each of us in our own revered way preserves our most cherished and basic core asset that is admired and respected by all – Freedom! The soldiers of HHS/2-11 FAR are proud of our chosen profession and appreciate all the love and support we have received from our loved ones while we add another chapter to our time-honored history.

Please, do not hesitate to email me to address any issue / concern you may have.  
[scott.greenblatt@us.army.mil](mailto:scott.greenblatt@us.army.mil)



Border Team 2 conducting Close Air Support Training in Penjwin, Iraq (NCOIC: SSG Kyle Scott)

Respectfully,

CPT Scott Greenblatt  
HHS/2-11 FAR  
Commanding

1SG David Kucic  
HHS/2-11 FAR  
First Sergeant

“Gator’s”

Greetings to the “Gator” family,



I would first like to start off by saying thanks to all of the wives and family members for what you do each and every day. Every strong unit has a stronger family support group and I appreciate each and everything you do for our soldiers. It’s October and the soldiers continue to remain focused on training. This month has brought new challenges to the “Gators” in more ways than one. We begin this month off by conducting Infantry task as well as our Artillery task. We have conducted several live fires this month, with junior leadership at the helm. R and R is going great with the expectation of all of the eligible soldiers being able to take leave. I ask that the wives whose husband hadn’t made it home yet to remain patient and understand that the chain of command is doing everything in its power to get your love ones home as soon as possible. I would also like to congratulate SPC Higgins and Emanuel for receiving the Combat Medic Badge. Keep the letters coming to your love ones. This is the best morale builder we have out here. I would like to close by saying it is not as long as it used to be so keep your head up and continue to march forward until we get home.

GATOR FOR LIFE  
CPT CELESTER THOMAS  
A/2-11 FA  
Commanding

“Bulldog’s”



SSG Henry, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Section B/2-11FA

#### Family and Friends:

September was filled with interesting days and nights for the soldiers of the Battery. The month started off with a visit from Major General John Batiste, Commanding General of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division. The 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division is based out of Germany, and is our Division Headquarters in Iraq. MG Batiste was very impressed by our soldiers living conditions and quality of life. He remarked that we were much better off than most of the soldiers across the division. General Batiste was also quite impressed by the layout and functionality of the Forward Operating Base.

The following week Bulldogs from both FOBs McHenry and Gaines Mills fired their artillery cannons during a three day long exercise in support of C Company, 1-27 Infantry. The Battery fired over 150 munitions varying from High Explosive, to Screening Smoke missions. We fired missions in support of the infantry soldiers, Enemy Air Defense Suppression in support of Apache Helicopters, and used smoke munitions to mark targets for the helicopters. This exercise was definitely the highlight for the month.

About mid-month soldiers from our McHenry Platoon were selected to provide security on a Civil Affairs mission to the town of Zaab, Iraq. As the Convoy was leaving the town they encountered an ambush from Rocket Propelled Grenades and Automatic Weapons fire. Our guys fought back defiantly and defeated the insurgents attacking them. There were no casualties suffered by anyone in the convoy. Miraculously, an RPG round hit the door of one of the Task Force's vehicles but did not detonate!

Your Bulldogs continue to train hard while over in Iraq. During September one of our sections completed a Howitzer Section Certification. We also conducted a night live

fire range with our assigned machine guns. The soldiers at Gaines Mill went outside the base and were able to fire their Grenade Launchers into our impact area north of the Base. Part of our impact area was once an Iraqi defensive position during the war last year, so our guys were able to use some left over Iraqi equipment as targets. Not something you get to do back home.

Everyone who was able to go through the range seemed to really enjoy this training.

Special recognition goes out to SPC Kamalpreet Bal and SGT Jun Paris. SPC Bal was named 2-11 Soldier of the Month for September. SGT Paris was likewise awarded the 2-11 NCO of the Month for September. September was the final month of the quarter for us. At the end of the quarter we had reenlisted well over 100% of our goal for reenlistments. The Battery led the Battalion in reenlistments for the quarter. Thanks to those soldiers that committed to continued service and on an even higher level thanks to the wives, girlfriends, and families that supported these soldiers in their decision to "Stay Army!"

With the onset of October, the daily temperatures have finally dipped below 100 degrees. We all hope this month goes by quickly, and sweeps on into November.

As always thanks for supporting your Bulldog Soldier.

Bulldogs!

CPT Brad Culligan  
Bulldog 6  
1SG Ron Matzen  
Bulldog 7

### "Cougar's"

The Cougars are doing exceptionally well. We are living and working in two primary locations. Most of the battery is located in Dibis, a city to the northwest of Kirkuk. The fire support platoon recently deployed to Samara with the Golden Dragons. The supply section is also located in Kirkuk where they work with the logistics team to help keep us ready for any mission. A portion of the firing platoon also lives in Kirkuk and works in the city of Altun Kapri. The Cougars in Dibis and Altun Kapri have been busy using the skills of a motorized infantry unit.

The Cougars are doing great things. In Dibis, the soldiers have been working hard to train the Iraqi National Guard soldiers in both Dibis and Altun Kapri. We are building Joint Coordination Centers for the emergency and security services in the two cities. The Cougars have two rural clinics under construction, and opened up two schools at the beginning of October that they renovated over the summer. We have a modern and sanitary slaughterhouse under construction for the City of Dibis. C Battery has been busy delivering school supplies and heaters for the classrooms. We have a desk repair shop running at our patrol base. As we deliver school supplies, we pick up broken desks and return them with fresh paint and wood the following week. October was a record month for seizing illegal weapons for the Cougars. The Cougars helped more than 800 people during three medical missions to rural villages in October. The battery also supervised all of the security for the democratic election of the Sargaron City Council. We have also been busy surveying the election sites for the upcoming national elections. Another rewarding project is our work to improve the lives of the Iraqi people in the Displaced Returnee Camps in the area with water, electricity, heaters, and blankets.

The Fire Support Platoon has been working extremely hard. They are conducting operations near Samara with the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division. They have been on the move so much that they should have the easiest time of all of us redeploying. They haven't been anywhere long enough to accumulate all of the junk that the rest of us have. The FIST Platoon is always in action. In a way we are all very jealous because their year must have been faster for them than all of the rest of us. We are very proud of the Golden Dragons.

We continue to make quality of life and force protection improvements to the patrol base in Dibis. This month we added more showers, toilets, sinks, dumpsters, internet computers, phones, and weight benches. 1SG Rumell's photo is featured in the July 2004 issue of the *Armor Journal* in an article on training the Iraqi National Guard. The Cougars that coach the Altun Kapri Baseball League have had articles about them in dozens of national and local newspapers including the *Washington Post*,

the *Lawton Constitution*, and an October 2004 *Army Times* article.

It looks like almost every soldier who deployed to Iraq before May 2004 will have the opportunity to take 14 days of leave in the United States. Redeployment is fast approaching and we will all be glad to be home. We miss everybody at home very much. We are looking forward to singing Aloha 'Oi to Iraq and returning to our Ohana. Please don't hesitate to contact me for any reason at [Whitney.Campbell@us.army.mil](mailto:Whitney.Campbell@us.army.mil). Cougar Pride!

## FAD:

Eyes of Thunder!

I received an email a couple of weeks ago that included this quote by Colin Powell. "Perpetual optimism is a force multiplier." The attitudes of our soldiers, leaders and families continue to make our team successful in the missions each of us is tasked to accomplish. The 25<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Detachment team is spread between Iraq, Hawaii, Minnesota and countless cities across the United States. Without the constant prayers, well wishes and support of our families, our small unit could not have accomplished so much this year in Iraq. Another month is upon us. Time continues to fly and the end is in sight. Please stay focused on seeing us safely arrive home, but remember that our work is not finished here in Iraq.

With a new month come promotion orders for the soldiers worthy of a jump to the next rank. On 1 October, the 2-11 FA Battalion Commander, LTC Connell, promoted CW2 Hunter, PFC Droghei, PFC Lewis and PFC Pearman to CW3 Hunter, SPC Droghei, SPC Lewis and SPC Pearman. After the ceremony, the Q-37 radar sections hosted a great BBQ complete with steaks, pizza, salad and a cake. It was a great chance for our team to be together. SPC Gulley, SPC Ski, SPC Kitt and SGT Schmitt are all intent on seeing the next rank before we redeploy to Hawaii. They are all studying hard for the promotion board in November, while SPC (P) Peguero proved that he is ready to be an NCO by doing a great job on the October board. It is inspiring to watch men pursue these high goals while remaining selflessly



focused on the success of our team. Very Well Done!

The R&R Program is running very well for the 25<sup>th</sup> FAD.

Easy 92 has officially been attached to us longer than any other unit since the deployment started. I think they are actually considering unpacking their bags for the long haul. I think the manner in which the Easy 92 families support their soldiers perfectly mirrors the incredible support the rest of our team has been taken care of by our families. We are all so lucky for your daily sacrifices at home.

Rumors and planning dates are circulating like crazy. Please do not get sucked into believing the hype until you have heard the information from us. We are working hard and thinking a lot about everything that will go into changing responsibility with the next unit and heading home. This is a complex operation. Be patient. If you are currently off island, you may want to start considering the date you will return to Hawaii. We will get more information on this timetable. Prepare for changes and bad information, but know that we will try to get you all of the data you need as quickly and correctly as possible.

Take care. Everyone's optimism makes us stronger, safer and so much more successful. Thanks.

Respectfully,  
CPT Adam Wojcik  
25 Field Artillery Detachment Commander



## **A note from your FRG:**

I want to thank each and every one of you for the support you all have given each other. This is a critical time now that we are nearing the end of the deployment. Please make sure you are prepared for your spouse to return. Please take advantage of all the resources that are out at ACS and the FRG.

Melissa, Battalion FRG Leader

HHS:

Aloha Ladies of HHS,  
There is not much longer left ladies. I know that the road has been long but it is almost over. You guys are awesome and without each of you our FRG would not be the HUGE SUCCESS that it is. I appreciate all of your hard work and countless hours of volunteerism in support of the soldiers in the Battalion. Also, we are losing a phenomenal lady in our FRG, Mrs. Petra Manning. Petra, we love you and we will miss you so much and thank you for the bottom of our hearts for all of your support to the FRG and the BN. You will be greatly missed. To everyone in HHS, thank you for everything that you have done and for everything that you continue to do in support of the Troops. Not much longer so hang in there and remember TEAM-- Together Everyone Achieves More!

Anisha Donegan  
HHS 2/11th FA  
FRG Leader  
HOOOOAAHH!

Charlie Battery:

Charlie Battery FRG meeting will be Saturday, November 6th held at the Tropics at noon. All Charlie Battery Spouses are encouraged to attend.

## What ACS has to offer?

### Spouse's Night Out

Every Thursday night from 6:30 PM, all spouses of deployed soldiers are invited. Some of the upcoming events are

Free childcare is available for Blue Star Card holders by calling 655-3929 no later than 12:00 noon on the Tuesday prior to each Thursday night event.

Reservations can be made up to two weeks in advance!

### Ready for Reunion

Nov 10 – “Soldier’s Mental State: Effects of deployment” at the NLC 1900-2030

## A note to the Soldiers:

- ♥ Hey, Matt! Just want you to know that we love you and miss you! We're counting the days till we can all be together again. Be safe! We'll see you on the island.

XOXOXOXOXO,  
Traci & Maci

- ♥ I wanted to tell you congratulations on your upcoming promotion, I'm so proud of you! We're starting to get excited now,,,it's getting closer and closer. Keep your head up and know that we love you always ~ Miss you Dena

- ♥ SSG Blowe Clifton,  
I love you so much honey. We miss you and are so ready for you to come home. Hurry home daddy. Love Heather, Andrew and Alyssa

- ♥ SPC Hatchett  
Stay Sweet Alex, You don't have much longer. Be blessed. We love you!